

APLIC -TOK
INTERPRETIVE CONCEPT WORKSHOP
SEPTEMBER 2-5, 2003



U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge

The Portico Group

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Alaska Public Lands Information Center - Tok
Interpretive Workshop
September 2nd – 5th, 2003
Tok, Alaska

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INTRODUCTION

The Alaska Public Lands Information Centers are interagency visitor centers designated by Congress as part of the Alaska National Interest Lands Conservation Act of 1980. The centers serve the public by providing trip-planning information, recreation and visitor information, fish and wildlife information, Alaska Marine Highway reservation, interpretive programs, and films and videos about Alaska's rich heritage of public owned and managed lands. The federal and state agencies that are represented in the APLICs are: the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Geological Survey, U.S. Forest Service, and the Alaska Departments of Community & Economic Development, Transportation & Public Facilities, Fish and Game, and Natural Resources. There are four APLIC facilities in the state. The Ketchikan center is managed and operated by the US Forest Service, the Anchorage and Fairbanks APLICs are managed and operated by the National Park Service and the Tok APLIC is operated by the State of Alaska through the Department of Community and Economic Development.

The existing APLIC in Tok is significantly undersized and unable to accommodate the current number of visitors stopping in Tok while traveling the Alaska Highway. In future years it is projected that tourism to Alaska will increase and there will be even greater demand for the information and programs offered at the Tok APLIC.

The State of Alaska through the Department of Transportation and Public Facilities in partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service have initiated design and site acquisition planning for a new APLIC facility in Tok. As part of the early planning for the new APLIC, the USFWS hosted an interpretive planning workshop in Tok on September 2 – 5, 2003. The goals for the workshop were to identify the desired and/or anticipated types of interpretive materials, themes and displays to be accommodated in the project and the amount that will be related to the Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge and to other partner agencies. The interpretive program developed in the workshop will be used to evaluate and refine the facility program and help inform the architectural and site designs to be developed for the new center in the future.

This report documents the conclusions of the interpretive workshop and details the processes and ideas generated in the sessions.

Those in attendance were:

Charles Mayes, The Portico Group

Dennis Meyer, The Portico Group

Janice Coleman, The Portico Group

Steve Keller, USKH

Odin Brudie, State of Alaska, Tourism Planner

Bill Kiger, Alaska State Parks, Interpretive Specialist

Heather Johnson, Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge, Supervisory Park Ranger

Ed Merritt, Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge, Refuge Manager

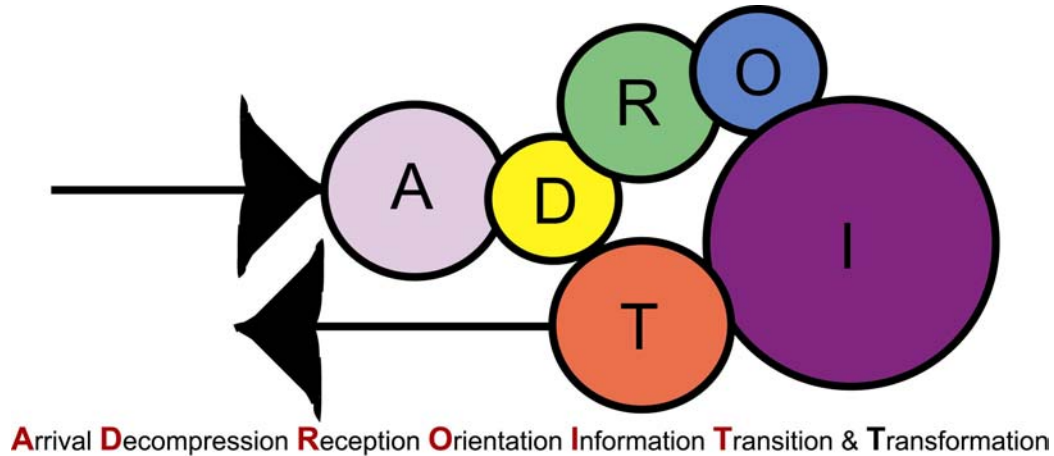
Lisa Conrad, Site Manager for Alaska Public Lands Information Center - Tok

John Harris, USFWS Alaska Regional Office, Chief of Construction

Jeff Kowalczyk, BLM Fortymile Management Area, Recreation Planner

UNDERSTANDING THE VISITOR EXPERIENCE

When considering the layout and organization of a public visitation facility such as the Tok APLIC it is important to understand the experiential needs of visitors. The process of a visitor arriving and engaging with the facility can be summarized as occurring in six discrete steps, the so-called ADROIT process:



1. **Arrival:**
In their progression toward the site or to the building, visitors need to feel a comforting sense that they have arrived and are safe and secure. The point of entry needs to be visible and welcoming. The way to enter and the routes of travel must be easily and intuitively understood. For the APLIC it is important that there be a highly visible and easily recognized roadway entrance from the Alaska Highway. A notable gateway/entrance to the site and possibly an attractive view of the building can accommodate this need. From the parking areas, the pedestrian route to the building entrance needs to be attractive, direct and welcoming.
 2. **Decompression:**
Visitors need to be able to “breathe a sigh of relief” and know that they can relax and their needs will be attended to. Parking will need to be easily negotiated, attractive and adequate. Restrooms and gathering areas need to be convenient and comfortable. At the APLIC this means that the design of the parking areas needs to consider busses, RV’s, SUV’s and big Pick-up trucks as well as cars. There should be restrooms in or near the parking areas for summer, high-season use. Outdoor group and family gathering areas and picnicking facilities should also be near parking. Long-haul semi trucks can be accommodated in a separate area near the highway. In the APLIC building, restrooms and group gathering areas need to be near the entrance.
 3. **Reception:**
Visitors need to know that they are genuinely welcomed to the facility. A friendly face near the building’s front door counts for a lot. Visitors and staff need to have the ability to see each other immediately as the visitor enters the building. The APLIC will need a staffed reception station directly visible from the building entry.
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4. **Orientation:**
There is a large amount of information available at the APLIC and visitors can become disoriented if faced with too many choices. There is always the need to initially pause and decide which way to go, and be able to reconnect with a sense of the familiar when new decisions need to be made. The APLIC will need to be organized to give visitors an initial overview of the information, programs and experiences available during their visit so that they can determine what they may want to do and the timing and sequence of their activities at the facility. This is a place where intuitive wayfinding and spatial understanding is critical.

 5. **Information (Interpretation):**
Once visitors are firmly engaged with "being here," and having had their arrival comfort and welcome needs met, they are open to learn and see things in new ways as they explore and build their own knowledge base. This is where the APLIC can introduce visitors to the stories of the land and culture of the Borderlands region and the recreation opportunities available in all of Alaska's Public Lands. The entrance to the interpretive exhibits needs to be easy to see and very inviting.

 6. **Transition & Transformation:**
Visitors need to walk away from the facility feeling good about their experiences and taking something with them that is relevant to their everyday lives and their stay in Alaska. Being able to purchase a book or other remembrance of the information just acquired, or being able to act on the information by choosing to go to a location or participate in an activity helps to complete the interpretive experience. This is the area where trip-planning needs to be located along with state maps, highway informational brochures, the interpretive audio tapes, natural history book sales should be here along with information from local business about activities and services in Tok and the Borderlands region.

SUMMARY OF INTERPRETIVE PLANNING EXERCISES

In a series of exercises, attendees responded to questions, and the answers were tabulated for use in development of exhibit content and an interpretive approach. The reader will note that the process was cumulative, building toward specific interpretive elements such as a Main Message – which will guide the entire design process – and other ideas that suggested possible exhibit experiences for the visitor.

Why do this project?

To equip visitors with the information they'll need to have a safe, comfortable and productive visit here and statewide.

To increase their understanding of the systems at work here.

To “bring it to them” in lieu of visitors accessing remote places.

To contribute to a lengthened stay time in the Borderlands surrounding Tok and the Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge.

Because interpretation enriches people's lives.

Who is your audience?

Aim the communications at 8th graders. Use a tiered information approach.

There is a potential for visitorship increase among the Alaskan residents audience in fall, winter and spring that this project should address.

Summer is tourist time therefore it is important to interpret the Alaska winter experience.

“Retired” is the largest sector among tourist visitors.

Resident Alaskans.

Many are international visitors who tend to be more adventurous and inclined toward eco-tourism.

The trend in marketing Alaska is to Japanese and German and possibly French international visitors. Consider foreign language brochures to parallel exhibits.

1/4 arrive by bus and have limited or no free time.

3/4's arrive in RV's or cars and are focused on heading elsewhere. This group needs better marketing and destination attractions here, so they'll stay here longer. This project should address this issue.

Lingering visitors stay at the campgrounds near the end of the season (to avoid the summer crowd). They're looking for unique experiences, which this project can address.

What are your interpretive (learning) objectives for the visitor?

There are unique experiences here for your enjoyment.

You need to be aware of the size and scale of this place.

Understanding the ecology will make your visit more enjoyable.

See the interdependency between *life* and *place* in Alaska.

We want you to value Alaskan lifeways.

What are your emotional objectives for the exhibits (and thus, the visitor)?

Experience a high state of emotion.

Have time alone.

Be in awe, but be wary.

Feel connected to *people* and *place*.

Make a *spiritual* connection.

Feel at home.

Feel “teachable” and ready to learn.

What are your behavioral objectives for visitors after they leave the exhibits?

Just do it! Get out there!

Practice environmental etiquette.

Get personally involved.

Practice stewardship.

Look for, appreciate, buy, etc., Alaskan art, food and products.

What is the Main Message visitors should take home?

“Life is interdependent with place in this vast migration zone”

What are the six major interpretive concepts that must be delivered to the visitor, in ranked order?

1. The Living Interior (what lives here)
 2. People and Living in Alaska (history of people)
 3. Land of Cold and Extreme (circumpolar conditions)
 4. Old Alaska (geology)
 5. Public Lands (the neighbors, agencies and activities)
 6. Voyage of Discovery (personal adventure awaits)
- Umbrella topic: Migration (concept of passages, journey)
- Unranked topic: Getting Around in Alaska (transportation)
- Non-interpretive topic: Trip Planning

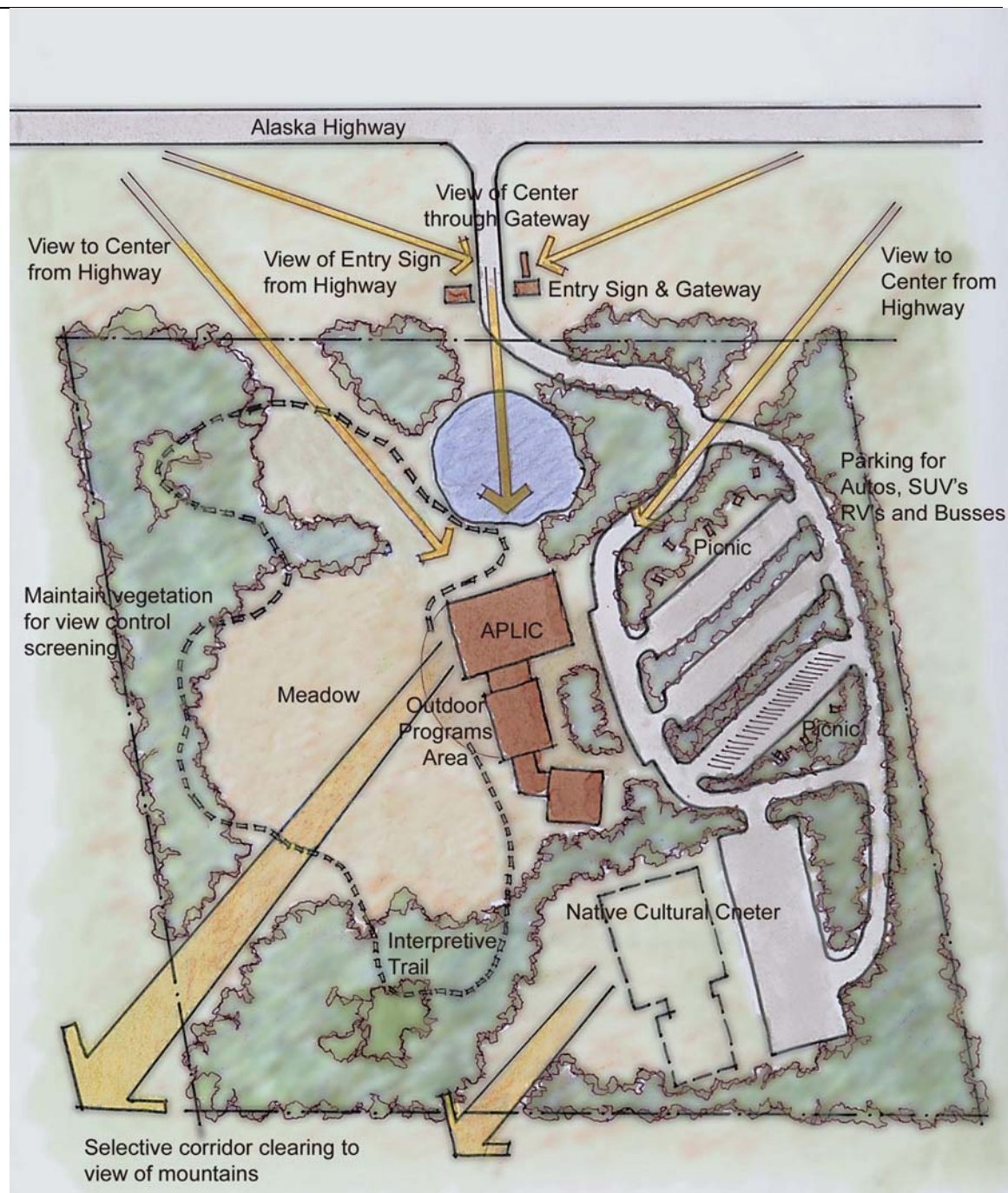
INTERPRETIVE APPROACH

The Interpretive Approach is based on the idea of migration in the Borderlands. This was a pre-historic access route between the Bering Land Bridge and continental North America. It was the historic passage for trading, and it was used for seasonal hunting. Massive bird migrations flow through the area, and moose, caribou and other animals migrate back and forth. Today, tourists and residents traverse the area on the Alaska Highway or its subsidiaries, following the same historic routes. Everything is on the move, including the geology – water, wind, and fire that seasonally sweep through, reshaping the land.

The idea of migration will be introduced as visitors enter the parking lot, and will be fleshed out in the first exhibit gallery. Then it will follow the Storyline like an interpretive *thread*, reappearing in the subsequent exhibits. The exhibits themselves will emphasize movement, through the cultural and natural forces that sweep the Borderlands.

INTERPRETIVE SITE CONCEPT DIAGRAM

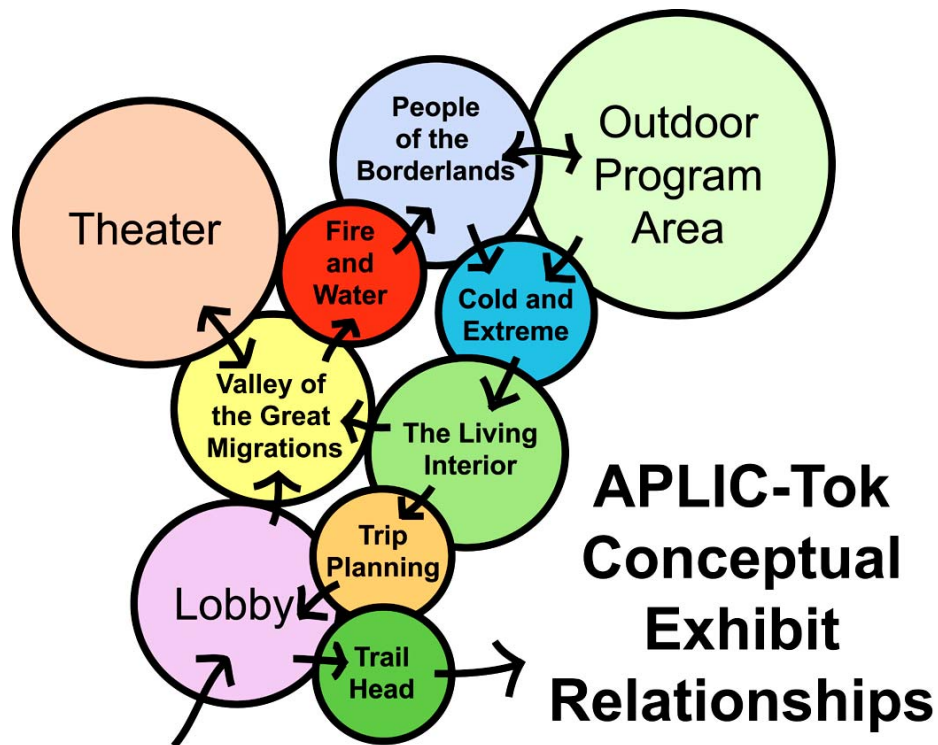
Three potential sites for the new APLIC have been identified in Tok by a previous study. The sites were all visited by the interpretive planning team to identify whether there are existing site features that could be beneficial to providing additional site-specific interpretive experiences in association with a new visitor information center. All three sites offer large areas of native boreal forest and are relatively flat. They all offer similar opportunities for trails and picnic areas. None of the sites has existing surface water features. None of the sites has existing forest clearings that offer territorial views of nearby mountains although it appears that view corridors could be established on any of them. Based on these visits it was determined that none of the sites had a substantial advantage over the others for providing site-based interpretation. The site diagram is based on the preferred site identified in the final report of a 3 yr. site selection process.



The site concept diagram reflects the consideration of offering a highly visible gateway from the Alaska Highway, creating lake and wetland habitats for visual and interpretive benefit, making the parking areas attractive by using native vegetation for screening and buffers, providing direct access and visibility of the building entrance and utilizing areas of the site for outdoor programs, picnicking and interpretive trails.

PRELIMINARY VISITOR CENTER EXHIBIT CONCEPTS

The following exhibit concepts are preliminary in nature. They grew out of information received, learned, or observed while visiting Tok and Copper River. The concepts attempt to fold together, in a logical but also elegant order, the many ideas we heard, the scenes we saw, and the emotions we experienced. In this way, using ourselves as surrogate visitors, we have created some exhibit ideas to share with client team.



**“LIFE IS INTERDEPENDENT WITH PLACE
IN THIS VAST MIGRATION ZONE”**

Migration: Life Moves through the Borderlands

(Introduction to the Visitor Center)

VALLEY OF THE GREAT MIGRATIONS

Visitors are greeted by a Migration Map of the region as an introduction to the exhibit. The gallery is a round, cove-ceilinged “black box,” with a landscape mural around the walls, accurately oriented to the compass, and showing the recognizable geologic features within the Borderlands. Patterns of braided rivers cross the floor, and patterns of clouds pass along the walls. “Walking,” “swimming” or “flying” through the gallery are full scale, artistic wood models of Upper Valley Athabascans, explorers and traders, a Chilkat with trade goods, migrating birds, a settler, a caribou, a moose, a bear, fish, several mammals such as wolf, lynx, marten, beaver and muskrat, and others such as weasels, voles, and shrews. Set in the floor near each model is a simple plaque with information about its migration in the Borderlands. Visitors walk among the models while surrounded by the mural.

Freestanding in front of the mural are three spot-lighted interactive Migration Stations, each one facing a particular area of the scene.

MIGRATION STATIONS

1. *The Earliest People* A map displays the Bering land bridge route, tracing it through the Interior and Borderlands. Copy speculates about the origins of human habitation in N. America. Reproduction campsite and tool artifacts copied from Kluane, Tetlin and Wrangell-St Elias are there to be handled. A directional microphone provides simulated sounds of Paleo Indians, and a small AV monitor plays off-the-shelf captioned clips about the Bering Migration.
2. *The Footsteps of History* A similar map displays the routes of Athabascan – Tlingit – Russian fur traders, the Chilkat Trail/ Houligan Trade, and the route of gold miners during the Klondike Rush of 1898. Reproduction traps, trade goods and mining equipment can be touched and handled, or observed in artifact cases. A directional microphone provides audio sounds in Russian, Chilkat, and other languages, and a small AV monitor plays off-the-shelf captioned clips about early users of these trails.
3. *And the Migration Continues ...* A third map displays the natural routes of water as glaciers and rivers, and migrating animals such as caribou, moose, birds, mammals, and fish. Overlaid on the map is an updatable layer showing the “human” routes of the pipeline, cargo, tourists and residents. An inset map identifies Alaska’s Public Lands. A directional microphone provides audio sounds of cars and trucks, rushing

rivers, birds and contemporary people, while a small AV monitor plays off-the-shelf captioned clips about early tourists on the Alcan Highway.

ON THE MOVE: FIRE AND WATER SHAPE THE LAND

This small gallery packs a lot of punch, and will be one of the hooks that draws visitors back for repeat visits. A path leads through a darkened environment, where special effects and fragments of scenes create the sense of fire and water.

Narrator: “First there was Fire in the belly of the earth, giving shape to the land, across the length of Alaska.” Visitors experience intense heat, red light, film footage and sounds of volcanic explosion, with glowing lava and mud flow. They stop at a topo map of the Pacific Rim volcanoes, with buttons for different years of eruption, and panels predicting future eruptions (with emphasis on Alaskan peaks).

Narrator: “Every summer Fire comes from the skies, burning the forests and grasses in the dry summer months and etches changes across the Borderlands. Fire can be frightening but it is a critical force for renewal and refreshing of the ecosystem. Without the help of Fire to make clearings and maintain open areas, many of our wildlife residents would have no place to live.” White flashes of lightning, silhouetting the spruce forest, then flames in a tree, are followed by the crackle of fire, the smell of smoke. Embers are seen in the roots of a thicket, faintly aglow. Lights come up on photos of burns, wildlife data, vistas of bright wildflowers, images of animals in clearings, and an updatable map of burn locations, by the year.

Narrator: “Fire is patient and persistent in its regular visits that alter the face of our land. At some locations in the basin it comes often, every 30 or 40 years and at other places it may be 100’s of years between its visits. When it does come it can be strong! This fire will burn until Winter, and its marks will remain for decades, maybe centuries. But Fire is only one force in the environment and not even the strongest, that force is – Water!” Visitors now stand in the middle of a braided stream in a chilly space full of the sounds of water in all its phases – bubbling, gurgling, splashing, roaring, dripping from eaves, or thumping along the river bottom. Below them, flat video screens create the river bed. Around them, lights come up on photos of huge glaciers, blue ice caves, torrential rivers in flood stage, and endless braiding. These projected images change to show water causing erosion, carving braids, carrying silt, with a possible view to a braided stream outside.

Narrator: “You can see Water in many of its guises as it shapes and forms the land. And there is also Water you only rarely see underlying it all, it is frozen water known as PERMAFROST, whose presence or absence dictates all of life’s forms in the Arctic.” A cutaway view of frozen, touchable “permafrost,” along with maps and diagrams of its actions, and photos of drunken forests created by permafrost conclude this segment. Before leaving, visitors use a lavalier microphone to listen to the amazing sounds from deep in the permafrost.

PEOPLE OF THE BORDERLANDS

A photo gallery opens onto an adjacent outdoor program area where demonstrations, artist in residence demonstrations or dances and performances can be held at scheduled times, linking to the idea of *People of the Borderlands*. The gallery is lined with portraits of Alaskans in all ages and conditions, shown against related background photomurals – sweeping landscapes, lonely settler cabins, frozen rivers, autumn aspen, or village settings – and is punctuated with personal artifacts such as hunting and fishing gear, or a palm pilot. Organized around categories, these photo essays help visitors understand the differences and similarities between various types of groups living in Alaska and transiting through the Borderlands. Directional microphones or hear phones provide access to oral histories, local music, and invitations to “please visit!”

PHOTO ESSAY CATEGORIES

1. “On Discovery’s Trail: Yesterday’s Rugged Individualists”
This essay dwells on the idiosyncrasies of early explorers, trappers, and naturalists, their experiences in the Borderlands, the troubles they had, the contributions they made, and the history they created.
2. “Alone by Choice”
Features individuals who now, or once, made their homes on the land – far from roads or airports, and how they get along.
3. “Villages and Towns: Community Life in the Borderlands”
Features families, clans, town and village residents, their group activities, how they get around in Alaska, how towns and villages interact, and how they survive and preserve their traditions – both modern and traditional.
4. “The First Ones: Asian Immigrants in North America”
Instead of portraits, subtle, atmospheric sketches and legends or poems will convey the presence of these ancestral figures.
Note: See Trip Planning area for “How Can Visitors Meet Alaskans?”

LAND OF COLD AND EXTREMES

This small exhibit creates a transition between the People of the Borderlands, and the Living Interior, helping visitors understand the temporal qualities of Alaska, and the effects of these rhythms on the land and its occupants. The ceiling is coved and gently curved and painted overhead to depict a clear Alaska starry night. Stars and constellations are shown using UV activated paints. UV light sources and other small colored light sources are hidden from view in the ceiling coves and controlled to create the visual effect of slowly dancing aurora borealis glow around the ceiling perimeter. At the center of the room is a suspended globe that has a light projected to show the coverage of sunlight in summer and alternatively in winter. This exhibit visually illustrates the rhythms of the seasons.

CONTENT ORGANIZATION

1. Where on Earth?

The globe illustrates this “Circumpolar “Place, showing the reasons for day/night, sun/dark, and summer/winter cycles, plus weather systems and seasonal change.

2. Under the Weather?

Effects on the land, people, plants and animals are explored on a monitor set within a photo montage of winter/spring images. Visitors view Life under the snow; Home as a survival cocoon; and Deprivation - light or night.

3. Incredible Light!

The explosion of activity and abundance of growth that comes with the long days of summer is explored on a monitor set within a photo montage of summer/autumn images located on the opposite side of the room from “Under the Weather?” Visitors view the Longest day; Bounty of the land; and Extreme adventures.

4. Sticking it Out: Alaskan Voices

Visitors exit the gallery to the sound of Alaskan Voices describing the many reasons for their attachment to this land.

THE LIVING INTERIOR: GATEWAY TO ALASKA

Now visitors enter the largest, and last gallery, where the Living Interior is examined and celebrated from its geologic past to the habitats of today. An introductory element introduces the agencies and the lands they hold in public trust.

CONTENT ORGANIZATION

1. Introduction: Biodiversity and Public Lands

The introduction answers the question: How do people use the land and wildlife now? It covers governance and agency management practices, partnerships and their roles and responsibilities (non-technical), and research – what is going on now and how its done. It focuses on a map of Alaska that shows *all* the Public Lands.

2. Reading The Borderlands: a Natural History “Museum”

Informed that “With a little coaching, you can see what’s going on,” visitors gather around a topographic map of the Borderlands. They find directions to wildlife viewing, and to places where they can see nature’s processes “writ large and small.”

2a The Land: Old Alaska!

Thousands of years of movement and change (plate tectonics, earthquakes, mud slides, glaciers, etc.), and the extent of the Boreal Forest, are explored through video and interactive exhibitry. Rocks, soils and gravel ... and sand dunes, the effects of permafrost, elevation, and erosion, along with “marks that stick around,” are revealed with simple methods for detecting their locations and effects.

2b The Plants

A wall featuring the plants of the area offers colorful images and stories of their individual interdependencies with land, water, people and animals. Models, artifacts and vignettes provide 3-dimensional interest while explaining the connections, such as the idea that some aspen groves are one single plant containing the same DNA. Among the plant forms are black and white spruce, balsam poplar, aspen, birch, willows, ground covers, berries, flowers, fungi and algae. Visitors are reminded that “Size is not a yardstick in this land – look again before you decide the age of a tree or shrub.”

2c The Animals

This portion of the gallery opens into a view of the Valley of the Great Migration (see previous), where full size animal models appear to wander through the room. Overlooking these animals, visitors find stories about their interdependence with land, water, people and plants, and are reminded that “Wildlife is wild!” From tiny or mid-size mammals to really big animals, and including birds, fish and insects, visitors are introduced to the wide range of life, and are given simple tools for safe viewing and for understanding the signs animals leave.

2d Habitats and Their Processes

All of the above combine to form unique habitats: Alpine Tundra; Extensive or fringed wetlands; Rivers, lakes, creeks and ponds; Boreal Forest Lowlands; and Boreal Forest Uplands.

3. “How Do You Fit and What Can You Do?” celebrates the actions of residents and seasonal visitors.

TRIP PLANNING: SAFETY AND SCENERY IN THE BORDERLANDS

The Trip Planning area is separate and opens off of the previous exhibit with a direct connection to the lobby area. It has a direct view to the topographic map of the Borderlands in the previous gallery so that guests can refer back to the map as they consider trips and activities in the area. The character of the Trip Planning area is separate from the main exhibits and the lobby – it offers a quiet place to discuss plans and peruse maps and materials. It would be desirable to include an informal sitting area with a low table, comfortable chairs and a fireplace for relaxed gathering and conversation. The trip planning area will need to have easy access to adjacency to the information/reception station for reservations and information about the Alaska Marine Highway.

CONTENT ORGANIZATION

1. Welcome to Alaska – Opportunities are Endless

Orientation to Alaska in general, the Interior in particular, with information about the Tok “intersection” routes/offerings: Tetlin Wildlife Refuge, State Parks, BLM / 40-Mile, and our neighbors further out – Wrangell-St. Elias, Copper River, and Kluane Refuge. Alaska’s Public Lands begin here, with visitor access to Travel Kiosks offering tailored information about their destinations.

2. Trip Planning: Navigating the Interior

This is a wild wilderness, don’t forget to be safe. Activities to see and do include wildlife viewing, scenic highways, visitor centers and tourist information centers, Native arts and culture, cultural events, and recreational activities – rafting, flying, riding, skiing, hiking, camping, hunting and fishing. “Tips for the Road and Trail” topics include:

- Being prepared – what to have with you and how to use it
- Etiquette and safety around animals
- Pack it in, pack it out
- Visiting the villages
- Village etiquette
- Photography
- Private land
- Campgrounds
- Alaska scenic highways and byways
- Alaska Marine Highway
- Rest stops, food and gas locations
- What to do if you get into trouble
- Where to go to get the best wildlife viewing
- Judging the weather
- Judging distances and the lay of the land
- Knowing your limitations – energy, skill, equipment, time & distance
- Permits and access points

SLIDER QUESTIONS

The “Slider” system uses voting as a way to elicit information. Questions printed on large sheets of paper ask participants to place a colored sticker next to the answer of their choice. The spread of dots represents the “answer” to the questions. Reduced versions of the Sliders can be found in the Appendices, where each dot represents one vote, and the vote spread on topics is apparent. Below are answers generated by the Slider activity.

- *Should the general activity level be quiet, bustling, or in-between?*

Answer: Semi-quiet to medium-quiet.

- *Would you prefer an active or passive level of interactivity, or in-between?*

Answer: Range from medium-passive to medium-active.

- *Should the character of the interactive experience be low tech/high touch, or high tech, or somewhere in-between?*

Answer: Range in-between.

- *What is your preferred level of visitor socializing in the Visitor Center – individual participation, group participation, or some of both?*

Answer: Widely ranging opportunities, but primarily individual.

- *Should the exhibit style be understated elegance or flash and dazzle, or somewhere in-between?*

Answer: Widely ranging, but primarily understated elegance.

- *Visitor flow can be linear, random, or some of both – what is your preference?*

Answer: Range from medium-linear to medium-random.

- *How many open-ended questions should be employed, a little, a lot, or in-between?*

Answer: Range from medium amount to medium-lots.

- *What is your commitment for ongoing maintenance?*

Answer: In the medium range.

- *Is your interest in changeable exhibits a little, a lot, or in-between?*

Answer: Ranges from a little to a medium amount.

- *How do you handle donor recognition, one panel for all donors, or spread out to various spots?*

Answer: One panel/location.

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- *Would you like to see ways for visitors to give feedback and personal opinions?*

Answer: Ranges from medium to medium-lots.

- *The amount of exhibit content to be distributed by staff should be none, lots, or in-between?*

Answer: Ranges from none to lots, primarily grouped at medium.

- *How much focus should be placed on exhibits for children?*

Answer: Medium to medium-little.

- *What is the appropriate amount of technical information to convey?*

Answer: Medium little and medium.

- *When you think about the “handshake” between the exhibits and the architecture, do you envision the exhibits in a flexible, multi-purpose room, or a “box” gallery, or as custom fit with the building design?*

Answer: Custom fit with building.

- *Will you expect to host events in the exhibit galleries?*

Answer: There may be some functions held in the galleries, others will be in separate areas.

- *What level of audiovisual use and integration do you desire, a distinctly separate theater, a theater inside the exhibits, or theatrical AV integrated within the exhibits?*

Answer: Distinctly separate theater, modest range of AV/theatricality in exhibits.

- *From an aesthetic and themed perspective, do you see the style as historical, or contemporary, or some of both?*

Answer: Ranges from medium-historic to medium-contemporary, with some of both.

- *Do you see the style as elegant, playful, or some of both?*

Answer: Medium playful, with some trending toward elegant.

- *The amount of content to be conveyed should be low, high, or in-between?*

Answer: Medium-low.

- *As you think of the exhibit finishes, do you envision polished/high finishes, rustic/hand-done finishes, or something in-between?*

Answer: Medium, but trending toward rustic/hand-done.

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- *Would you prefer the exhibits to have very few types of graphic panels, or many, or in-between?*

Answer: Ranging between medium to many.

- *What about color – bright, subtle or medium?*

Answer: Spread entirely across the range of choice.

- *Should the amount of theming in the exhibits be low, medium or high?*

Answer: Ranges from medium to high, primarily at medium-high.

BUILDING AND SITE PROGRAM

A preliminary site and building was developed for the facility in 2002. As part of this workshop and interpretive study, the preliminary site and building program was reviewed and tested against interpretive and contact program needs. The following table indicates the recommended refinements to the preliminary building program based on the Sept. 2003 workshop:

Building Space/Activity	Preliminary Program	Refined Program
Lobby and Restrooms	890 sf	2,000 sf
Information Counter	890 sf	890 sf
ANHA Book Sales	500 sf	500 sf
Exhibit Area	4,850 sf	4,850 sf
Theater/Auditorium	2,010 sf	3,300 sf
Classroom/Meeting Room	625 sf	1,000 sf
Administrative & Staff Support Areas	1,020 sf	2,500 sf
Mech/Elect/Interior walls 29%	3,128 sf	4,362 sf
Total	13,913 sf	19,401sf

Exterior areas for parking, outdoor programs, picnicking, and interpretive trails will need an additional 4 – 5 acres of developed site.

DISCUSSIONS ON DESIGN CHARACTER/STYLE FOR FACILITY

Although conceptual design for the facility was not part of the scope of this workshop, the client and design team had ongoing informal discussions about the possibilities for making the design of the facility work collaborative with the interpretive messages to help convey the stories of Alaska that are part of the APLIC. With this in mind, the team visited historic “Roadhouse” sites near Delta Junction and near Copper Center as well as the new Visitor Center at Wrangell/St. Elias National Park in Copper Center.

The general concept of using the form and impression of the traditional Alaskan “Roadhouse” as a design form-giver offers benefits to the message delivery in that it reflects Alaskan historic architecture that has traditionally served travelers as the APLIC now does and may be used to interpret the elements to be looked for in visits to historic roadhouse sites.



Roadhouse near Delta Junction



Roadhouse near Delta Junction



Roadhouse near Gulkana



Wrangell St. Elias National Park Visitor Center Site



Wrangell St. Elias National Park Visitor Center Interp. Bldg.



Wrangell St. Elias National Park
Visitor Center Interior at Window

Wrangell St. Elias National Park
Visitor Center Roof Truss

